

MACNEIL, H.A.

DRAWING 22

71.2009.085.02835

SCULPTORS-M
(BUSTS)

Statues of Abraham Lincoln

Hermon A. MacNeil

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



"Lincoln" \$450 = (bronz)

W. B. Westcott,
Sc.

28 1/2" high.

2

from.

Grand Central Art Galleries
15 Vanderbilt Ave
N. Y. City.

HERMON A. MACNEIL
121-01 FIFTH AVENUE
(NORTHERN BOULEVARD)
COLLEGE POINT
NEW YORK

May 13, 1932.

Mr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
Lincoln Historical Research Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of the 10th just received. "Lincoln the Lawyer" (bust) by H. A. MacNeil is installed in the Entrance Hall of the Law Department, University of Pennsylvania, as well as in several other law departments of universities. The statue itself I have never made larger than four feet.

of either of these
If you care for photos, ^{of either of these} A. B. Bogart, 30 E. 14th Street, New York City, has the plates.

Very truly yours,

H. A. Mac Neil.

HAMacN/ML

Virginia, Illinois
April 27, 1940

Mr. Hermon A. MacNeil
College Point
Long Island
New York

Dear Mr. MacNeil:

Recently I saw in the Public Library at Rushville your bust of Abraham Lincoln, and was much interested in it. Mr. Albert Morris Bagby, of New York, its donor, can tell me little about it, however, and has suggested that I write to you.

I should have done so anyway, since I am writing a series of articles for the Illinois State Historical Society on "Lincoln in Sculpture," and am therefore seeking to obtain as directly as possible from each of the sculptors the story of why and how he made his Lincoln--how and when the conception first came to him, how it developed in his consciousness, what in Lincoln's character he most desired the finished work to express, and so on.

Will you be kind enough to tell me some of these things about your Lincoln bust--or is it a full statue in the original? For some reason, with many books on sculpture around me, and all of them containing much about your work, I have failed to find more than a mere mention of this particular work.

I shall indeed appreciate it if you will tell me as much as you will about it, also if you have made any other Lincolns. Please say if I may quote your words, either verbatim or in substance. I feel that to let the sculptors tell their own stories to a great extent, will appeal to readers far more than will my own comment.

And can you send photographs for reproduction? One showing yourself at work on some Lincoln statue or bust would be especially good. Any printed matter you may have, such as a dedication day folder showing how the statue is placed and giving information as to size, material, financing, etc., would be helpful.

Thanking you for your reply, I am

Yours very truly,

HERMON A. MACNEIL

P. O. BOX 46

PINEBLUFF, N. C.

May 10 '40.

Dear Miss Martin

Answering briefly your inquiry about my Lincoln work -

I first got interested by competing in the Natl competition for a Lincoln to be erected at Springfield Ill. A perfect code of competition was written - judgment 1st on sketches - - Three or four were chosen - (mine among them)

Next stage - a three foot figure. This was to be the end of the competition - mine & some other were chosen but the jury were unable to decide between them & "passed the buck" to us two. to make a full size (again in competition)

I refused & asked them to abide by their own condition. The "Lincoln the Lawyer" was what I called mine (pre-^{it} Presidential) & the bust you speak of at Rushville is the head of Lincoln made at the same time (& for) this competition.

The University of Penn. law school & several other institutions & people have found this head the satisfactory one & purchased it.

Rugstiehl, in an article (or book) speaks highly of this work.
In starting my study of him (Lincoln) I began with him as a working man - (And I myself know what it is to work with dirty hands).
He liked to think & argue points even when at work.

A most natural attitude with soiled hands is to run one hand under the opposite arm pit - particularly if his clothes happened to be clean. The next step might be (years later) to drop the tool & replace notes in that hand - which instructively folds up over the other arm.

Thus evolved the general pose if I make it clear for the character of the head & of course had not only the mask made by Volk but also the back of his photos from childhood or as far back as they went. The result you can see is an attempt to make the meditative thoughtful - somewhat sad Lincoln. He had a hard life as we all know - but he pulled thru triumphant.

Very Sincerely

H. A. MacNeil

P.S. Quote as you wish -
Busts are all in bronze -

MACNEIL, H.A.

Drawer 22

SCULPTORS-M
(busts)

